

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-02 FAA-00 EPA-04 OES-06

CEQ-01 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 /095 W

-----171407Z 078453 /43

R 171354Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0743

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS LONDON 02801

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJ: CIVAIR - CONCORDE

1. MEDIA REACTIONS TO ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SENT MESSAGES ON CONCORDE TO PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN AND THE FRENCH PRESIDENT HAVE BEEN MIXED. BOTH COMMERCIAL AND BBC TELEVISION REPORTS LATE EVENING FEB 16 WERE VERY NEGATIVE. IT SEEMS STATEMENTS MADE AT WHITE HOUSE PRESS BRIEFING RATHER THAN REPORTED CONTENTS OF PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES ARE MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR NEGATIVE REACTIONS.

2. THE TIMES ARTICLE FEB 17 REPORTS PRESS BRIEFING FACTUALLY. THE FINANCIAL TIMES NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT IN ONE OF TWO SEPARATE ARTICLES FEB 17 CHARACTERIZED THE ANNOUNCEMENT AS "... HALF-HEARTED SUPPORT ..." FOR CONCORDE AND STATED "MR. CARTER'S CLEAR HINT THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED TO FORCE NEW YORK APPROVAL FOR CONCORDE LEAVES ITS FUTURE POSITION IN AS MUCH DOUBT AS EVER". HOWEVER, THE SECOND F.T. ARTICLE BY THE SAME AUTHOR BEGINS, " CONCORDE PROSPECTS HAVE TAKEN A DECIDED TURN FOR THE BETTER AS A RESULT OF PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S BACKING FOR GIVING THE UNCLASSIFIED

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AIRCRAFT A 16 MONTHS' TRIAL AT WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK".

3. BBC AND ITV CORRESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON, REPORTING ON LATE NEWS BROADCASTS FEB 16, BOTH EMPHASIZED NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN PARTICULAR THAT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT DIRECT THE NY/NJ PORT AUTHORITY TO REACH ANY PARTICULAR DECISION. THIS, THEY SAID, WOULD BE A BLOW TO

CONCORDE'S CHANCES IN NEW YORK. AT THE END OF THE BBC'S
REPORT, HOWEVER, IT WAS NOTED THAT THE UK GOVERNMENT HAD
FOUND THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO BE HELPFUL.

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Release Event: n/a
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SAS ID: 3297889
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Status: NATIVE
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Type: TE
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Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009